

## **The duty to explain. The Centre for Holocaust Studies at the Jagiellonian University<sup>1</sup>**

*If these studies [studies on the Holocaust and totalitarianism] are to be at such a prestigious university like the Jagiellonian University, which has its own long and glorious history and which has carried through so many years its missions, then I think that it is appropriate that the Jagiellonian University has, among its many duties and obligations, taken upon itself equally the duty to explain to our young people what the Holocaust was and what is totalitarianism.*

Andrzej Wajda

Created in 2008, the Jagiellonian University Centre for Holocaust Studies (CHS), an independent unit of the Faculty of International and Political Studies, the work of the then faculty dean Prof. Wiesław Kozub-Ciembroniewicz, serves students who desire to know what happened to European Jews in Poland and Europe. It also supports young academics researching the problem of the Holocaust of Jews and other groups which fell victim to Nazi racist policies. For it was Polish students in the 1990s who searched for supervisors under whom they could write MA dissertations on the Holocaust. Often only after arriving to study did they discover Cracow's Kazimierz district and the ab-

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<sup>1</sup> CHS's activity is possible thanks to its staff, who deserve a word of recognition for their exceptional involvement in the development and growth of the unit. I would like to also say a thank you for the reports which have allowed for the current presentation of CHS. I extend my thanks to Dr. Bartosz Kweciński, a lecturer at CHS, Jolanta Makowska, its chief administrative specialist, Katarzyna Kopff-Muszyńska, the Summer School's coordinator as equally to the experts: Dr. Piotr Weiser, Dr. Jerzy Wójcik, Szymon Beźnic, to the Ph.D. students, and in particular to: Elisabeth Büttner, Katarzyna Suszkiewicz, Dagmara Mrozowska, Agnieszka Zajączkowska-Drożdż, Katarzyna du Vall, Piotr Sternalski as well as to the students and former students: Aleksandra Kalisz, Ewelina Malik, Ewa Górzyńska, Adam Banach, Tomasz Kobylański, Marcin Kaczor and Maja Brand, who tragically died in a rail disaster near Szczekociny, and was involved in many projects from the very inception of CHS: we remember this with deep thanks.

sence, bar a tiny minority, of Polish Jews. They wanted to undertake a difficult research subject on the attitudes of Poles towards Jews during World War II.

Professor Maria Janion, a historian of culture and literature of the Romantic period and an undoubted authority in Poland at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, said within the context of the Holocaust on the occupied Polish lands that we attempted will never be cleansed. After the Holocaust there remains mourning without reprieve, yet it is important to talk of this, particularly to young people. The Centre for Holocaust Studies continues the programmes and projects initiated within the framework of the Workshop on Holocaust Studies begun by Prof. Zdzisław Mach in 1998, initially a part of the Department of European Studies, which was to become the Jagiellonian University's Institute of European Studies (IE UJ). Within the framework of the work at the Workshop on Holocaust Studies and in conjunction with the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE/ODHIR), among some of the projects produced was the Internet Guide 'Education for Tolerance,' containing descriptions of over 300 institutions involved in the matter of education for tolerance, religious and denominational freedom, minorities, multicultural education, citizen society, antisemitism, the Holocaust, racism, interreligious dialogue, conflicts, humanitarian aid, gender equality, the Roma and the Sinti.

The inauguration of the Centre's activities was on the 17<sup>th</sup> of January 2008 at the *Libraria* in Collegium Maius. Why was a Centre for Holocaust Studies at the Jagiellonian University created? 'Because the Holocaust is a part of contemporary history, but also the history of fascism, it is a part of the European tradition with which we have to come to terms and which we have to understand.' So said the then rector of the Jagiellonian University, Prof. Karol Musioł during the inauguration of the unit's activities. According to Prof. Kozub-Ciembronicz, research into the Holocaust is the university's duty. For the annihilation of the Jews is a part of the history of Cracow and of the whole of Europe. The mayor of Cracow, Jacek Majchrowski, recalled that prior to World War II a quarter of Cracow's population was Jewish and added that 'after the end of the war it turned out that these people had gone, that a thousand-year period of Jewish culture, Jewish religion, of Jews in Cracow had finished.'

Professor Bogdan Szlachta, the dean at Faculty of International and Political Studies stated:

The Centre for Holocaust Studies can utilise a broad didactic and academic base, though first and foremost it can draw on specialists who can shine light on the most complex, complicated and dramatic events connected with the Holocaust in such a way so as to comprehend these complex Holocaust questions through not only historical but sociological, legal and political science research into the matter.

The CHS is based at the Castle at Przegorzały. Its task is to conduct academic research and teach classes covering the subject matter of the Holo-

caust and those areas directly connected with it; it equally is to propagate knowledge about the Holocaust. In realising its basic goals the Centre in 2011 organised the first and only MA degree programme in European Studies specialising in the Holocaust and totalitarianism (the intake for 2011/2012 – was 22 students, for 2012/2013 – 40 students, which was the maximum number of places available). The degree is directed towards those BA graduates who wish to continue their studies at MA level; it is designed for those interested in the Holocaust, the functioning of totalitarian states (in particular Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy), the consequences of denominational and ethnic prejudice, analysis of ethnic, political, social conflicts (including contemporary international conflicts), analysis of xenophobia, racism and antisemitism in a broad historical and comparative perspective.

The rector of the Jagiellonian University, Prof. Wojciech Nowak stated in an interview for students of CHS:

Every action taken in the direction of deepening one's knowledge about totalitarianism is necessary. This is an acquaintance with the truth and this is the university's very mission. As a university we are 650 years old. This is a long period of history and if we look at it from the present perspective everything around has changed. Yet one thing is unchanged and this is the university's mission, which besides teaching equally included the search for truth. This is a completely timeless value.

Young people take decisions about their professional future, decisions which are motivated in the most varied of ways. Every type of motivation is good in as far as it is in accordance with our inner nature. The offer to study this type of MA degree in European Studies – on the Holocaust and totalitarianism – is directed to those students who wish to give sense to their lives, to learn from the past, how to shape the future and how to give it a form so that future generations do not experience the crimes that the generations living in the twentieth century participated in. This is an interdisciplinary, modern didactic proposal for young people interested in discourse on the Holocaust in Poland and the impact of this memory on our identity.

Professor W. Kozub-Ciembroniewicz answered the question as to why it is beneficial to study about the Holocaust and totalitarianism: 'The tragic phenomena of the twentieth century were proof that liberal democracy, which is for us a value, has to be defended. This degree programme at the Jagiellonian University is a degree programme with a future, a degree programme that is most needed.'

In 2012, students of European Studies taking the Holocaust and totalitarian systems specialisation founded the *Memento* Academic Association in order to develop their academic interests and commemorate the Shoah. The members of this buoyant Association have organised several study trips to sites of remembrance including to the State Museum at Majdanek in Lub-

lin, the Museum–Memorial Site in Belżec and the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum. They have made contact with non-government organisations (including the Grodzka Gate NN Theatre in Lublin and The Auschwitz Jewish Center in Oświęcim); they have organised an academic conference. Together with students from the Pedagogical University in Cracow they have taken part in trips to Vilnius and Israel.

The teaching programme at the CHS extends beyond the framework of the Institute of European Studies and encompasses the Jagiellonian University in its entirety. Students of the university have taken part in the Fellowship at Auschwitz for Study Professional Ethics (FASPE) programme since 2011, organised annually by the Jewish Heritage Museum in New York, Berlin, Cracow and Oświęcim for students of Medicine, Journalism and the Law. The course *Holokaust – zarys problematyki dla kierunków medycznych* [The Holocaust – a synopsis of the problem area for medical students], inspired by the FASPE project, covered annually for the academic years 2011/2012 and 2012/2013 over 180 students of the university's School of Medicine.

Łukasz Opozda, a Ph.D. student, shared his impressions of cooperation within the teaching programme at CHS: 'a student is at the centre not an anonymous entity but a partner who creates together with us the educational programme on offer, someone we listen to and thanks to whom we are able to make the range of courses all the richer.'

Up until 2013 the CHS had organised 8 international Summer Schools 'Teaching about the Holocaust' for over 500 teachers from all over Poland (out of 1340 who applied). The Summer School is a cyclical programme organised by CHS, the Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center in Skokie, Illinois, USA and the Yad Vashem Institute for the Remembrance of the Martyrs and Heroes of the Holocaust in Jerusalem in cooperation with Polish and foreign institutions: the Jagiellonian University's Institute of European Studies, the Galicia Jewish Museum in Cracow, the International Auschwitz and Holocaust Education Centre at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum in Oświęcim (MCEAH), the International Youth Meeting House in Oświęcim (MDSM) and The Auschwitz Jewish Center. The main sponsor of the Summer Schools is Claims Conference. The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany with the support of the Taube Foundation for Jewish Life and Culture and private sponsors from the USA. Amongst the invited experts were: Prof. Michael Berenbaum, Prof. Jan Tomasz Gross, Prof. Feliks Tych, Prof. Zdzisław Mach, Prof. W. Kozub-Ciembroniewicz, Prof. Jonathan Webber, Prof. Andrzej Żbikowski, Dr. Jolanta Ambrosewicz-Jacobs, Dr. Joanna Preizner, Dr. Alicja Bartuś, Dr. Bartosz Kwieciński, Dr. Dariusz Libionka, Dr. Piotr Trojański, Robert Kuwałek and Robert Szuchta.

The Centre for Holocaust Studies has organised or co-organised over 10 conferences, seminars and panel discussions, including the academic colloquium *Antisemitism and Racism in Europe – Fascist Ideology and Practice* (9–10 November 2008), a conference devoted to the person and work of Father Stanisław Musiał, in co-operation with the Bernardin Center at the Catholic Theological University in Chicago and the Cardinal Suenens Center at John Carroll University in Cleveland, the Center for Christian-Jewish Learning, Boston College, the Tanenbaum Center for Interreligious Understanding (5 March 2009). The conference was an opportunity to discuss the intellectual legacy left by Father Musiał in the field of theology, the social sciences and Christian-Jewish relations, as well as to remember his person and to collect the recollections of those who knew him. Academics and experts from Poland participated in the discussion: Prof. Jan Woleński, Prof. Joanna Tokarska-Bakir, Prof. Stanisław Obirek, Prof. Stanisław Krajewski, the publicist Konstanty Gebert as well as experts from American universities including Prof. Doris Donnelly of John Carroll University and Prof. John Pawlikowski of Chicago.

From the 21<sup>st</sup> of October until the 24<sup>th</sup> 2008 MCEAH and CHS organised the national academic conference *Auschwitz i Holokaust – dylematy i wyzwania polskiej edukacji* [*Auschwitz and the Holocaust – the dilemmas and challenges for Polish education*]. The aim of the conference was to arouse academic reflection on the teaching about Auschwitz and the Holocaust in Poland from the moment of its inclusion within the school educational programme in 1999. An academic colloquium devoted to the person of Henryk Sławik was organised to mark the 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death (19–20 November 2009). The colloquium's main aim was to commemorate the heroic figure that was Henryk Sławik and others of the Righteous. In addition it aimed to further debate on civic responsibility and the shape and form of remembrance about the past.

The conference *Holocaust Studies Today: The Research and Pedagogic Challenges of a Developing Field*, organized by the Jagiellonian University's Institute of Sociology, CHS and the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, inaugurated the creation of The European Association for Holocaust Studies (12–15 June 2011). From the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 6<sup>th</sup> of July 2011 the conference organised by The International Council of Christian and Jews: *Religion and Ideologies. Polish Perspective and Beyond* in conjunction with Faculty of International and Political Studies (3–6 July 2011) took place in Cracow.

On the one hand, through its national and international contacts in Europe, the USA and Israel, the Centre for Holocaust Studies opens up space for young Poles who wish to be citizens of the world, for them to have an impact on its shape. On the other hand, it makes it possible for them, through multiple experience in research projects and trips abroad, to acquire the knowl-

edge, competencies and skills necessary in the challenges of future professional life. At the CHS, cooperation with many international and national institutions is fostered (17 partners with signed agreements), including the Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center, the Museum of Jewish Heritage – A Living Memorial to the Holocaust in New York, the International Council of Christians and Jews, Miami Dade College, Keene State College, Salem State University, the Conference House in Wannsee, Centropa, the Pedagogical University in Cracow, the Museum of the History of Polish Jews, the Foundation for the Protection of Jewish Heritage in Poland (FODŻ), the Jewish History Institute, the Jewish Community Center (JCC) in Cracow as well as many other institutions, museums, sites of remembrance, publishers, and academic journals. Every year students from Iona College meet for joint lectures with CHS students. On the 14–15 March 2011 the CHS hosted professors from the Cohen Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies from the only American institution of tertiary education offering degree programmes on the Holocaust and genocide studies at BA level – Keene State College. Dr Paul Vincent, Dr. Henry Knight and Dr. Skye Stephenson met with Prof. Andrzej Mania, the Jagiellonian vice rector for Teaching as well as with members of the CHS staff. The meeting was to prepare a joint, summer teaching programme. A similar programme is in preparation with Salem State University and Miami Dade College.

Of essential importance for CHS is its cooperation with non-government organisations as this gives the possibility for student internships, when students have the chance to acquire concrete practical skills. Thanks to this cooperation CHS experts have in turn the chance to share their knowledge with local societies. In 2008 in Wasilków (Podlaskie Province) workshops held by CHS experts for teachers and local community leaders were devoted to intercultural dialogue. The workshops were organised by FODŻ in conjunction with the Local Council in Wasilków as part of the Stefan Batory Foundation supported project *Badanie postaw wobec Żydów i stosunku do ich dziedzictwa, współpraca z lokalnymi partnerami w wybranych 15 miejscowościach, edukacja dla tolerancji* [Research into attitudes towards Jews and their legacy, cooperation with local partners in 15 selected locations, education for tolerance]. In addition workshops with CHS experts also took place in Łęczna (as part of the project *Łęczna – wspólna przeszłość, dwie kultury* [Łęczna – a common past, two cultures]), in Zamość, Suchowola and in other places in the provinces of Lublin, Podkarpackie and Podlaskie.

One of the CHS's most important partners is the International Youth Meeting House (MDSM) in Oświęcim, which through cyclical conferences held in conjunction with CHS links academics, educators, guides and specialists from non-government organisations. The International Youth Meet-

ing House is an institution stressing the importance of learning from the past in order to counter human rights violations and genocide today and to prevent their occurrence in the future. The cyclical conferences organised by MDSM – for instance *Oblicza Sprawiedliwości. Świat wobec Holokaustu i innych zbrodni ludobójstwa w XX wieku* (27–30 July 2011) [The Faces of Justice. The world in relation to the Holocaust and other crimes of genocide in the 20<sup>th</sup> century] or *Auschwitz i Holokaust na tle zbrodni ludobójstwa w XX i XXI wieku. Jednostka wobec zbrodni* (25–28 July 2012) [Auschwitz and the Holocaust against the background of crimes of genocide in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century. The individual in the face of crime], during which reflections and experiences were shared – are extremely useful as prior to them the slogan ‘never again’ had remained just a slogan.

Beside lectures, meetings, the publication promotions, CHS draws attention to the implementation within the Polish schooling system of innovative teaching methods aimed at countering antisemitism, racism, xenophobia and discrimination. It is equally CHS’s task to broaden knowledge and remembrance of the Holocaust in the manner understood by Milchman and Rosenberg (2003), as a remembrance creating space for differences, pluralistic remembrance, a perspective ‘community of remembrance’, serving not a mythicized past but rather a problematizing present – one not insisting on identity.

The Centre is not the first academic institution in Poland to examine the question of the Holocaust. An interest in the Holocaust, following the period of oblivion up until about the mid-1970s, developed after the collapse of communism in Poland, and in particular after the year 2000. It was then that Poland signed the Stockholm Declaration obliging the signatories to develop research, education and remembrance of the Holocaust, while in Poland there was a public debate about the individual collaboration of Poles following the publication of J.T. Gross’s book *Neighbors*.

Other academic centres involved in research into the Holocaust also exist in Poland, but the CHS is the first university unit whose exclusive aim is the simultaneous conducting of interdisciplinary research, education and remembrance of the Holocaust. It should be noted that institutionalized research into the history and culture of Jews in Poland was initiated first and foremost at the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, while work on fascism at the University of Wrocław, where the important academic journal *Studia nad Faszyzmem i Zbrodniami Hitlerowskimi* [Studies on Fascism and Nazi Atrocities] was founded in 1974. This journal published studies and articles on Italian fascism, German National Socialism, Spanish fascism, the totalitarian currents in Europe in the first half of the twentieth century as well as post-fascist thinking after the Second World War. In 1986, the Inter-

faculty Unit of the History and Culture of Jews in Poland was set up at the Jagiellonian University, created by Prof. Józef A. Gierowski, and which was transformed in 2000 into the Jagiellonian University's Department of Jewish Studies and subsequently into the Institute of Jewish Studies. The creation of a further academic-research institution at the University of Warsaw – the Mordechaj Anielewicz Centre for Research and Education into the History and Culture of Jews in Poland, was initiated by Prof. Jerzy Tomaszewski in 1990. In 1993 the Centre of Jewish Languages and Culture was created at the University of Wrocław, at present the Department of Jewish Languages and Culture. Wrocław University's Institute of Polish Philology organizes Post-graduate Studies on Jewish Culture and the Holocaust. The Jewish Culture and History Section at the Maria Curie-Skłodowska University was founded in 2000, while the Holocaust Studies Centre at the Polish Academy of Sciences' Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, the main centre carrying out historiographical research in Poland, was created in 2003.

The Centre for Holocaust Studies has therefore not been created in vain. And what of the specifics of this academic unit, its special characteristics, its traits? From amongst the many activities that were designated by its creators, the fundamentals lie in research and teaching. Besides its academic callings, the Centre tries to develop its activities in such a way that the results of academic research would not simply be available through the staff's specialist publications. Although such publications are produced and are planned for the future, results are also diffused through video conferences for experts and students, for example with Prof. Yehuda Bauer, in conjunction with Yad Vashem and the United States Consulate in Cracow (13 October 2010), with the Miami Dade College within the framework of Genocide Awareness Week (12 April 2012), and also through workshops conducted in the autumn of 2008 by members of CHS, commissioned by the Foundation for the Protection of Jewish Heritage.

Its teaching aims, as well as the popularising of learning, are achieved through guest courses including those of Dr. Wolf Kaiser, the vice director of the Conference House in Wannsee, *Aspects of the Holocaust* (May–June 2008), Prof. Moshe Zimmermann of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem *Antisemitism, Nazism and the Holocaust in German and American Film* (20–28 May 2009), Dr. Sebastian Rejak of the Polish Ministry Foreign Affairs *Diaspora żydowska w USA* (May–June 2010) [The Jewish Diaspora in the USA] as well as through readings organised for the general public in convenient locations in the centre of Cracow such as at the JCC and the Galicia Jewish Museum.

Several panel discussions have come out of the annual Festival of Jewish Culture: a joint project of the Centre and the French Institute. At the JCC the



panel discussion *Jak uczyć o Holokaucie kolejne pokolenia?* [How to teach subsequent generations about the Holocaust?] took place (1 July 2012), while at the Galicia Jewish Museum the panel discussion *Przedwojenny Paryż jidysz* [Pre-war Yiddish Paris] and a screening of the film *Les illusions perdues 1941–1942* (30 June 2012) was held. The Centre makes an effort to be visible within the city and to increase awareness of the Holocaust not merely amongst specialists. This is helped by film screenings of, for example, *Defiance* (3 March 2011), *In Place of Death* (30 May 2011), *Ein weiters Field* (15 October 2011).

A notable event was the screening of films about the Holocaust combined with a meeting with A. Wajda organised on the 12<sup>th</sup> of March 2008 to commemorate the 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the destruction of the Cracow ghetto. The meeting in the Castle at Przegorzały attracted crowds of students eager to take part in the discussion with this master of Polish cinema. Meetings with eminent academics and authorities from public life also allow the question of the Holocaust to be brought to a broader public. The Centre's guests have included eminent academics, film directors and experts: Prof. Shimon Redlich (13 May 2008), Prof. Robert Wistrich (29 May 2008), Karol Becker (20 October 2008), Prof. M. Berenbaum (12 May 2009), Lucia Faltin (15 January 2009), Elizabeth Edelstein (30 March 2009), Marian Marzyński (31 March 2009), Artur Żmijewski (10 October 2009), Sir Martin Gilbert (17 February 2010), Tomasz Blatt (11 October 2010), Jean-Yves Potel (09 December 2010), Kamila Klauzińska (4 June 2012), Dr. Piotr Lubiński (5 June 2012).

The Centre for Holocaust Studies helps in the organisation of special symposia at the Jagiellonian University as part of the annual commemorations of the liberation of Auschwitz. Through the organising of the panel discussion [The Past – The Future. The Memory of Cracow's Jews] *Przeszłość – Przyszłość. Pamięć o Żydach krakowskich* [Past – Future. Memories of Cracow's Jews], which took place in the Castle at Przegorzały on the 15<sup>th</sup> of March 2008 with the participation of Prof. David M. Crowe, the author of a biography of Oscar Schindler, Prof. Maria Orwid [d. 9<sup>th</sup> of February 2009 in Cracow], Prof. Aleksander Skotnicki, Katarzyna Zimmerer and Robert Gądek, the Centre joined in the 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary events of the Cracow ghetto's destruction. 25 of those who had survived, partly because of O. Schindler, took part in the discussion.

In 2008, Jolanta Ambrosewicz-Jacobs obtained grants from the Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah and International Task Force (at present International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance) to research the attitudes of Polish young people towards Jews, the Holocaust as well as remembrances about the Holocaust; projects which she had initiated in 1996. The research into youth attitudes is a project with an educational component, realised in conjunction with academic institutions and non-government organisations. In 2009 Jolanta Ambrosewicz-Jacobs took part, as a member of the academic

council, in the international research project commissioned by the European Union's Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA), and realised by an agency of the Swedish government – Living History Forum. The results of the research, published in all European Union countries in 2010, showed that the widely declared connection between education about the Holocaust in places of remembrance and education on human rights in reality was a slender one; yet a connection which had been considered obvious by ministries of education and culture. An analysis of the literature, an opinion poll in 22 museums and places of remembrance, organised group interviews with teachers and pupils in 9 countries, individual interviews with educators, guides and curators in 14 European institutions as well as the participatory observation showed a lack of common discourse, joint conceptualisation as well as only a few examples of good practice linking both fields of education. Teachers of general history are not prepared to teach about human rights, while teachers of general social studies rarely have the knowledge or the tools necessary to teach about the Holocaust.

From its very inception the CHS team has been involved in a project to commemorate the Holocaust *Mapa pamięci o Holokauście* [The Holocaust Remembrance Map]. The Ph.D. students Agnieszka Nikliborc, Sylwia Kostka, Katarzyna Suszkiewicz and Agnieszka Zajączkowska-Drożdż took part in the research project *Polscy więźniowie w Norwegii podczas II wojny światowej* [Polish prisoners in Norway during World War Two] (2010–2011) and with immense perseverance sought out former Polish prisoners in order to strengthen their testimonies. This project was a part of an international project conducted by the Falstad Memorial and Human Rights Centre in cooperation with institutions and research institutes in Russia, Poland and the countries of former Yugoslavia.

Ph.D. students who are connected with CHS, in writing theses on the Holocaust and Auschwitz, obtain grants and conduct research projects during their internships: for instance K. Suszkiewicz was at Tel Aviv University within the framework of Polish Israeli Youth Encounters (October 2010–January 2011), Piotr Sternalski studied at the Istituto Dante Alighieri in Rome (October 2012), Katarzyna du Vall studied as part of the Erasmus Programme at University College London, in the School of Slavonic and East European Studies (September–December 2012), A. Zajączkowska-Drożdż received a grant from the Israeli Embassy in Poland for travel to Israel and research at Yad Vashem (in the academic year 2011/2013), while Elisabeth Büttner took part in research trips to Germany and France.

The staff and those who cooperate with CHS publish in many Polish and foreign journals. In 2009 in Cracow's Kazimierz there was a promotional event for the publication *The Holocaust: Voices of Scholars* within the frame-

work of the Festival of Jewish Culture. This collection of 24 essays under the editorship of Jolanta Ambrosewicz-Jacobs touches on the most controversial questions in the field of Holocaust Studies, with eminent academics and public authorities, whose work is connected to the subject of the Holocaust, being asked to share their personal reflections and attempts to answer the difficult questions from this field.

Thanks to the financial support of the Bureau for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe a second extended collection of essays *Dlaczego należy uczyć o Holokauście* [Why should we teach about the Holocaust?] (edited by J. Ambrosewicz-Jacobs and Leszek Hońdo) has been published, designed for free distribution amongst teachers. This book is equally addressed to those who are not indifferent to the fact that 10% of pre-war Poland was murdered as to those who possibly hitherto had not realised this. Authority figures from public life, specialists from various academic fields were invited to write essays: J. Tomaszewski, Z. Mach, Ireneusz Krzemiński, Stefan Wilkanowicz, Olga Goldberg-Mulkiewicz, Monika Adamczyk-Garbowska, S. Obirek, R. Szuchta, Tanna Jakubowicz-Mount, Stanisław Krajewski, Sergiusz Kowalski, Monika Adamczyk-Garbowska, Sławomir Kaprański, Hanna Węgrzynek, Andrzej Mirga, Natalia Aleksyńska and others.

‘We live in a world in which various vile things have taken place. A university is an institution whose role is to research the truth in order for that truth to be passed on, in order for it to be remembered. Therefore even those most painful, most awful, those least pleasant fragments of history for us have to be researched, passed on to young people and remembered.’ So said Prof. Karol Musioł, the then rector of the Jagiellonian University during the inauguration of the Centre for Holocaust Studies.

Research, education as well as remembrance of the victims of the Holocaust are necessary. Doctor B. Kwieciński, the film expert, lecturer at CHS, cited recollections from classes during an interview for *Alma Mater* nos. 130–131:

I will never forget the faces of the students after the screening of Herbert Gerdes’s *Erbkrank* of 1936 propagating the Nazi euthanasia project. The copy I had was a poor one by today’s HD and 3D standards which young people are used to – slightly embarrassing and requiring great patience from the viewer. But they stared at that blurred, flickering, silent image with increasing horror. I even saw tears. My faith in the sensitivity of young people was at that moment strengthened. I understood that they wanted to remember, that they wanted to be jointly responsible for a history that had taken place over sixty years before.

It is for just such young people and teachers who educate those even younger that CHS was created and tries to realise in conjunction with other institutions its mission, goals and tasks.

## Bibliography

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